

# Portable Ladders: Metal & Wooden

WAC 296-800-290

## Summary

### YOUR RESPONSIBILITY:

To make sure the portable ladders in your workplace are used safely and kept in good condition

### PORTABLE METAL LADDERS

#### You must:

Inspect your portable metal ladders periodically  
WAC 296-800-29005 ..... Page 290-3

Make sure your portable metal ladders are kept in good condition  
WAC 296-800-29010 ..... Page 290-4

Use your portable metal ladders safely  
WAC 296-800-29015 ..... Page 290-5

### PORTABLE WOODEN LADDERS

#### You must:

Inspect your portable wooden ladders frequently  
WAC 296-800-29020 ..... Page 290-7

Make sure your portable wooden ladders are kept in a good condition  
WAC 296-800-29025 ..... Page 290-7

Use your portable wooden ladders safely and for their intended purpose  
WAC 296-800-29030 ..... Page 290-8

Safely use a portable wooden ladder when working more than 25 feet above ground  
WAC 296-800-29035 ..... Page 290-10

Use wooden stepladders safely  
WAC 296-800-29040 ..... Page 290-10

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Portable Ladders:  
Metal & Wooden



# Portable Ladders: Metal & Wooden

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## Summary

(Continued)



### Exemption:

These rules apply to common types of portable wooden ladders except:

- Fruit picker ladders
- Industrial tripod ladders
- Combination step and extension ladders
- Stockroom step ladders
- Aisle way step ladders
- Shelf ladders
- Library ladders
- Other special ladders.



### Note:

- For design and construction requirements for wood and metal ladders, see WAC 296-24-780 and 296-24-79503 of the General safety and health standard.
- There are different types of ladders. Be sure to use one that is capable of handling the combined weight of the climber and the load being carried (working load).

Type	Duty Rating	Working Load
IAA	Industrial	Special duty – 375 lbs. maximum
IA	Industrial	Extra heavy – 300 lbs. maximum
I	Industrial	Heavy – 250 lbs. maximum
II	Commercial	Medium – 225 lbs. maximum
III	Household	Light – 200 lbs. maximum



# Portable Ladders: Metal & Wooden

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## Rule

### PORTABLE METAL LADDERS

WAC 296-800-29005

Inspect your portable metal ladders periodically

You must:

- Immediately inspect a ladder if it:
  - Tips over
  - Is exposed to oil or grease
  - Is exposed to excessive heat as in the case of fire
  - Is subjected to certain acids or alkali solutions.
- If it tips over, look at:
  - The rails for dents, bends or dented rungs
  - All the rungs to side rail connections
  - The hardware connections
  - Rivets for shear damage.
- Inspect the cables and ropes on portable metal ladders and replace them if they are defective.
- Check hardware fittings and accessories frequently and keep them in good condition.
- Mark defective ladders and take them out of service until repaired by a maintenance department or the manufacturer.

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# Portable Ladders: Metal & Wooden

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## Rule

WAC 296-800-29010

Make sure your portable metal ladders are kept in good condition

You must:

- Maintain your portable metal ladders in good, usable condition, at all times.
- Handle portable metal ladders with care and avoid dropping, jarring, or misusing them.
- Store your portable metal ladders on racks designed to protect them when not in use. The racks must have enough supporting points to prevent any possibility of excessive sagging.
- Properly support your ladder while transporting on vehicles. To prevent chafing and the effects of road shock, use supports that are made of material softer than the metal ladder, such as hardwood or rubber-covered iron pipe.



Note:

Tying the ladder to each support point will greatly reduce damage due to road shock.

Portable Ladders:  
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# Portable Ladders: Metal & Wooden

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## Rule

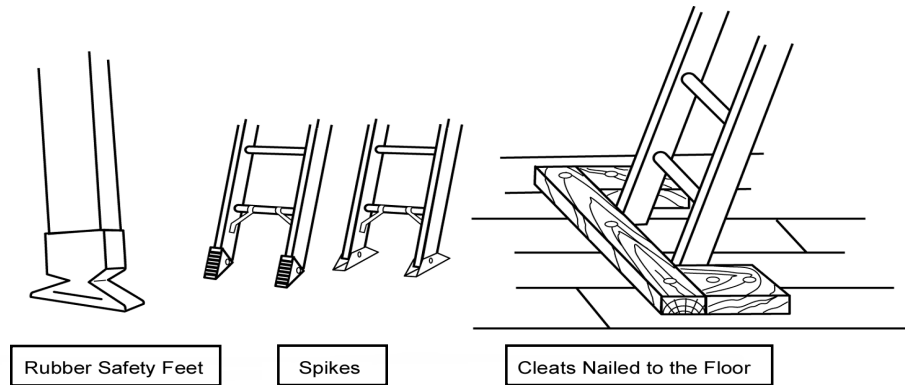
WAC 296-800-29015

Use your portable metal ladders safely

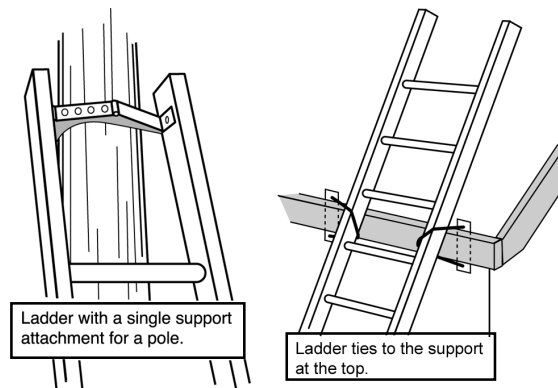
You must:

- (1) Use metal ladders only for their intended purpose.
- (2) Make sure the base section of the portable metal ladder has secure footing.

Examples of Securing the Ladder Base



- (3) Make sure both rails are supported at the top, unless the ladder has a single support attachment.



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# Portable Ladders: Metal & Wooden

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## Rule

WAC 296-800-29015 (Continued)

(4) Make sure while climbing portable metal ladders, your employees:

- Have both hands free to hold on to the ladder.
- Face the ladder when you are climbing up or down.

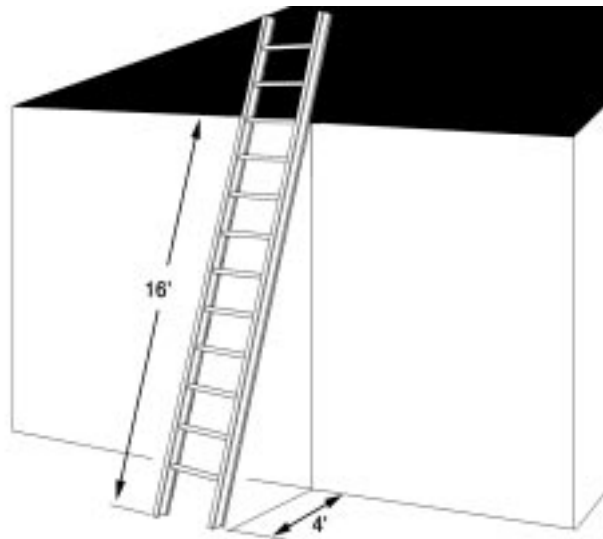
(5) Not tie or fasten ladder sections together to make longer ladders (unless the ladder manufacturer endorses this type of use, and you have hardware fittings specifically designed for this use).

(6) Make sure a nonself-supporting portable ladder is set at a safe angle. The proper angle is to place the base a distance from the vertical wall equal to one-fourth the working length of the ladder.



Note:

Safe ladder angle. A simple rule for setting up a ladder at the proper angle is to place the base a distance from the wall, equal to 1/4 the working length of the ladder.



# Portable Ladders: Metal & Wooden

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## PORTABLE WOODEN LADDERS

## Rule

WAC 296-800-29020

Inspect your portable wooden ladders frequently

You must:

- Make sure ladders with defects are:
  - Withdrawn from service to be repaired or destroyed
  - Tagged as “dangerous do not use.”

WAC 296-800-29025

Make sure your portable wooden ladders are kept in good condition

You must:

- Make sure your portable wooden ladders are maintained in good condition, and
  - Joints between the steps or rungs and side rails are tight
  - Hardware and fittings are securely attached
  - Moveable parts operate freely without binding or excessive play
  - Metal bearings are lubricated frequently
  - Frayed or badly worn ropes are replaced
  - Safety feet and other auxiliary equipment are kept in good condition.
- Not use portable wooden ladders with
  - Broken or missing steps
  - Broken or missing rungs or cleats
  - Broken side rails
  - Other faulty equipment.
- Not make improvised repairs on your portable wooden ladders.
- Not store your portable wooden ladders near sources of heat, moisture, or dampness.

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# Portable Ladders: Metal & Wooden

WAC 296-800-290

## Rule

WAC 296-800-29030

Use your portable wooden ladders safely and for their intended purpose

You must:

- (1) Use the appropriate length of ladder.
  - Use single ladders less than or equal to 30 feet long.
  - Use 2-section extension ladders less than or equal to 60 feet long.
- (2) Make sure ladders meet the following rules:
  - Shorter sections cannot be spliced to make longer sections.
  - Ladders cannot be made by fastening cleats across a single rail.
- (3) Use ladders safely.
  - Make sure ladders are not used as guys, braces, or skids.
  - Putting ladders on boxes, barrels or other unstable bases to make the ladder taller is not allowed.
  - Make sure ladders are not used in a horizontal position.
- (4) Make sure that rung and cleat ladders are set up at a safe angle. (See note and illustration on safe ladder angle in WAC 296-800-29015.)
- (5) Make sure that where the top of the ladder rests is reasonably rigid and strong enough to support the load.
- (6) Place the bottom of a portable wooden ladder so it will not slip, or the bottom *must* be tied or held in position.

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# Portable Ladders: Metal & Wooden

WAC 296-800-290

## Rule

### WAC 296-800-29030 (Continued)

(7) Not place a portable wooden ladder in front of doors that open towards the ladder, unless you:

- Block the door open

OR

- Lock the door

OR

- Guard the door to keep it from opening into the ladder.

(8) Make sure 2-section extension ladders overlap as follows:

Length of section of extension ladders (Feet)	Minimum overlap allowed (Feet)
Less than 36	3
37 - 48	4
49 - 60	5

(9) Make sure ladders with metal reinforced rails are used with the reinforcement on the underside to avoid hazards such as tripping and electrocution.

(10) Not place ladders in elevator shafts and hoistways, except where used by workers assigned to that type of work.

- Employees must be protected from falling objects, when assigned to work on ladders in elevator shafts and hoistways.

(11) Not support more than one section of plank per ladder rung.

- Do not allow more than 2 persons on one section of planking at a time.

(12) Brace the ladder to reduce the spring caused by weight on the ladder.

(13) Keep shoes free and clean of greasy and slippery substances when climbing.

(14) Have both hands free to hold on to the ladder when climbing.

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# Portable Ladders: Metal & Wooden

WAC 296-800-290

## Rule

WAC 296-800-29035

Safely use a portable wooden ladder when working more than 25 feet above ground

You must:

- (1) Secure the ladder at the top and bottom.
- (2) Not perform work that requires the use of both hands unless wearing a safety belt and lanyard secured to the ladder.
- (3) Not perform work requiring eye protection, respirators and/or pressure equipment if thirty feet above the ground.

WAC 296-800-29040

Use wooden stepladders safely

You must:

- (1) Use stepladders that are less than twenty feet.
- (2) Not climb on the bracing or the back legs.
- (3) Not use as single ladders.
- (4) Not stand on a step higher than the third step from the top, if working five feet or higher from the ground.
- (5) Not use the tops of stepladders as steps.

